



**Office of the Attorney General
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NEWS RELEASE

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**ATTORNEY GENERAL SUMMERS ANNOUNCES AGREEMENT TO CURB
TOBACCO SALES TO MINORS IN RITE AID STORES**

Rite Aid stores will implement new policies and business practices to curb youth smoking as part of an agreement with Tennessee and the Attorneys General of 19 other states and the District of Columbia.

“Many companies talk about how they want to reduce sales to minors,” Tennessee Attorney General Paul Summers said. “By entering into this agreement with state officials, Rite Aid is demonstrating its commitment to protect the health of young people.”

The multistate Rite Aid agreement is similar to previous agreements that apply to all Walgreens and Wal-Mart stores and to all gas stations operating under the Exxon, Mobil, ARCO, BP, and Amoco brand names in their states.

As part of its agreement, Rite Aid agreed to:

- Train employees on new policies and law regarding tobacco sales to minors.
- Verify the age of anyone who appears to be under 27 years old by checking valid government identification.
- Use cash registers programmed to prompt ID checks on all tobacco sales.

- Hire an independent entity to conduct random compliance checks of over 10% of all Rite Aid stores in the participating states every six months.
- Prohibit self-service displays of cigarettes, chewing tobacco, and snuff; the use of vending machines to sell tobacco products; the sale of cigarette look-alike products; and the distribution of free samples on store property.
- Prohibit the sale of smoking paraphernalia to minors.

The Attorneys General have long recognized that youth access to tobacco products ranks among the most serious public health problems. Studies show that more than 80 percent of adult smokers began smoking before the age of 18. Research indicates that every day in the United States, more than 2,000 people under the age of 18 begin smoking and that one-third of those persons will one day die from a tobacco-related disease. Young people are particularly susceptible to the hazards of tobacco, studies show, often showing signs of addiction after smoking only a few cigarettes.